

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I rise to join my fellow Coloradans, my colleagues in the United States Congress and others across the country in celebration of Native American Heritage Month.

Throughout this month we acknowledge the many accomplishments and contributions of the American Indian community in the United States. In Colorado, from the windswept plains in the east to mountains and plateaus in the west, Native American history has formed a strong part of our shared history. Today Colorado's native communities play an equally strong role in preserving our shared cultural heritage.

Just this month, as the chairman of the National Parks Subcommittee of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I held a hearing at Mesa Verde National Park that highlighted the importance of how this cultural landmark and others in the region can be better protected through cooperative efforts of our National Parks System and the region's tribes. Improved collaboration and consultation can be a positive step in achieving the goal of protecting these invaluable resources. Tribes have also worked independently to conserve and protect cultural resources that are important to our shared past. A strong example of these efforts has taken shape over many years in Southwestern Colorado where the Ute Mountain Ute tribe has worked to protect acres of sacred and historically important sites that are connected to the cultural resources that exist within Mesa Verde National Park.

The Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park, situated on the Ute Mountain reservation, serves not only as a means to protect important resources, but also as a means to educate and develop an economic base for the tribe and the region as a whole. Also in Southwestern Colorado, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe has worked to protect important cultural resources. Just this year, the tribe opened a state-of-the-art cultural center that is dedicated to telling the story of the Ute people, providing another cultural draw to Southwestern Colorado.

These are examples of how shared goals of cultural preservation can work symbiotically, and I believe that through close collaboration, the federal government and tribes throughout the country can better protect cultural resources while developing other opportunities in economic development and education.

This relationship will be crucial in creating new jobs both on and off tribal lands while building opportunities for the next generation. For example, the Ute Mountain Ute and the Southern Ute are among the region's largest employers, each employing more than 1,000 workers and generating millions of dollars in economic activity that

benefit the entire Southwest region of Colorado. Their success is a reminder that Indian Country is a strong economic driver that can play a critical role in our economic recovery.

Of course respect for government-to-government relations between tribes and the federal government extends to other issues. As we celebrate Native American Heritage month, we must remind ourselves of this relationship and the trust responsibility that exists between our Federal government and tribal nations. This is especially important when addressing issues that have hit the Indian country especially hard, such as unemployment, access to health care, education and housing, reliable law enforcement and access to justice. The federal government's trust responsibility is a call to work together to address these issues. Upholding this responsibility is vital to respecting tribal sovereignty and protecting tribes' ability to determine what is in the best interest of their communities. Cooperation and collaboration are paramount in maintaining a strong government-to-government relationship, and it is in our shared interest to advance the goal of empowering America's Native communities.

Mr. President, to close, I want to highlight a prominent figure in Colorado who we lost earlier this year named Ernest House, Sr. He was a stalwart defender of American Indian sovereignty and a champion of cultural preservation. Mr. House was a former Chairman of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and he represented the tribe before national, state-wide, and private organizations for more than 50 years. Chairman House's passing was a great loss for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Indian Country and for Colorado. I would like to recognize his contributions as part of Native American Heritage Month. I have no doubt that his legacy will be a strong part of our lives in Colorado and my thoughts continue to be with his family.

I am proud to join my fellow Coloradans in celebration of Native American Heritage Month. As we celebrate the many contributions of Colorado's American Indian community, I hope that we will call to mind the long history of America's Native Americans and their continued contributions to Colorado and our Nation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING MOUNT NOTRE DAME VOLLEYBALL

• Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate the Mount Notre Dame High School Volleyball team for winning their sixth Ohio Division I State volleyball title on Saturday, November 12, 2011. Mount Notre Dame is an all-girls Catholic school located in Cincinnati, OH.

The Mount Notre Dame Cougars prevailed in the championship match by

winning three out of four sets against defending State champions Toledo St. Ursula. Led by coach Joe Burke, who has won four state titles with Mount Notre Dame, the team's mantra was "believe."

Mount Notre Dame has become one of the most successful programs in high school women's volleyball in the State of Ohio, and I congratulate the Mount Notre Dame Cougars on their hard-fought victory.●

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL RAYMOND W. CARPENTER

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Major General Raymond W. Carpenter and his faithful service to our country. After 44 years of service to our Nation and the State of South Dakota, General Carpenter will soon retire from the United States Army.

Gen. Carpenter began his military service in 1967 when he enlisted in the South Dakota Army National Guard. General Carpenter later joined the United States Navy and put his photographic memory to work learning the Vietnamese language in preparation for his assignment at the Naval Support Activity in Danang, South Vietnam. Upon completion of his Naval service, he returned to the South Dakota Army National Guard where he was commissioned in 1974. He has commanded at all levels, from Lieutenant to Colonel.

General Carpenter is an engineer by formal training, tirelessly devising, planning and building. He was a founding member of the Director of the Army National Guard's Engineer Advisory Team and went on to be the chairman until May 2006. Engineering and organizational skills aside, General Carpenter is most passionate about soldiers: the Nation's sons and daughters who are in his care. I have seen this firsthand and have also witnessed his dedication to our Nation's veterans as he assisted me in awarding Korean War medals to veterans in South Dakota.

For the past 2½ years, Gen. Carpenter has ably served as the Acting Director, Army National Guard. In this capacity, he has led more than 350,000 National Guard soldiers from the 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia. As Chairman of the Military Construction and VA Appropriations Subcommittee, I have worked with Gen. Carpenter to fund important National Guard construction projects, and I was proud to have him testify before my subcommittee. He has represented our home State well and has been a tireless advocate for the members of the Army National Guard. He is truly a soldier's soldier. On occasion, when Big Army concocted some sort of short-sighted plan, there was Gen. Carpenter "standing like a stone wall" to look out for the interest of his soldiers and his country.

For his efforts, General Carpenter has received numerous awards and